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ABSTRACT

This report presents results of an evaluation of the bilingual education component of the Emergency School Aid Act Basic Project implemented in 1979-80 in the Dallas (Texas) Independent School District. Findings include: (1) The bilingual program was not fully staffed, and many schools were only able to provide English as a Second Language instruction (rather than native language instruction) to students. (2) The program's language achievement objectives were not met though some gains in general ability were demonstrated. (3) Some, but not all, of the resource teachers performed all of the activities specified in the program design. (4) Similarly, teacher aides did not all provide the supplementary assistance specified in the proposal. (5) Most of the administrators, teachers, and aides did participate in the bilingual workshops and seminars. (6) Parent involvement in the program was high. Appended to the report is a description of the Tests of General Ability (Inter-american Series), used in program evaluation. (JCD)

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# EVALUATION OF THE 1979-80 EMERGENCY SCHOOL AID ACT (ESAA), BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROJECT

EE80-329-31-09

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Dallas, Texas
September 1980

# Evaluation of the 1979-80 Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), Bilingual Education Project

**Evaluators:** Gary L. Elliott and Wayne R. Murray

Objectives of the Program: The Federal Government provided funds for this project to the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) in accordance with ESAA. The funds provided were to be used (a) to meet the needs incident to the elimination of minority group isolation and (b) to aid school children in overcoming the possible educational disadvantages of minority group isolation. The 1979-80 ESAA Grant was divided into four main projects, one of which was the Bilingual Project. This project was designed to provide supplementary bilingual instruction for students to enable them to learn baseline skills and concepts while they learn English. The students were to receive instructional reinforcement in the areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science utilizing the language in which they were most proficient. This program also included parent involvement and staff development for the administrators, teachers, and teacher aides.

Purpose of the Evaluation: The evaluation of the ESAA Bilingual Project was designed to delineate, obtain, and provide useful, descriptive, and informative feedback for decision making. The results of the Inter-American Series: Test of General Ability, or the equivalent Spanish form, given to the students in this program constituted the major thrust of product information. Questionnaires, direct observation, and interviews were techniques used to gather process evaluation information contained in this report.

Sample: There existed conflicting opinions as to the eligibility criteria for the students to be served by this project. One opinion was that only those students who were being bused for the purpose of desegregation were eligible to receive the services provided by ESAA funds. Another opinion, the one accepted by DISD ESAA administrators, was that identified limited-English-proficiency students were eligible to participate whether or not they were bused and whether their dominant language was English or Spanish. The schools involved and the number of students being served are presented below.

| Schools | No. of Students |
|---|---|
| Bonham | 152 |
| Bowie | 197 |
| Budd | 41 |
| Cowart | 128 |
| Donald | 96 |
| Frazier | 27 |
| Hogg | 179 |
| Holy Trinity | 72 |
| Johnston | 34 |
| Juarez | 148 |
| Mt. Auburn | 194 |
| Peeler | 150 |
| Rowe | 22 |
| Russell | 51 |
| St. Mary of Carmel | 237 |
| Seguin | 65 |
| Travis | 179 |
| Winnetka | 121 |
| Total | 2,093 |

An attempt was made to test eligible students in each grade at each school to make up the sample for evaluation purposes.

Evaluation Design: A sample of students being served were administered the Inter-American Series: Test of General Ability or the Prueba de Habilidad General in a one-group pretest and posttest design. Each student being served was identified, and the student's dominant language and level of instruction were noted by project personnel. It should be noted that some fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students were recommended and given tests that were on the high school level. A list of 1,265 students was given to project personnel to test, but only 1,082 students were actually given the pretest and their test materials returned to the Department of Research and Evaluation. Some students from every school were tested. The pretest was given during the last of October and the first of November and the posttest was given the last part of May. Students who took the incorrect level of the pretest and performed at or near chance levels were not posttested. Some students who took Level 4 of the test (for grades 7-8) were posttested on Level 3 and their pretest scores were converted to the equivalent score on the Level 3 test for data analysis. A discussion of this test is included in the appendix of this report.

Questionnaires were mailed to every resource teacher and teacher aide during March 1980. However, because less than 25% were returned, the questionnaires were again distributed to all resource teachers in June, during staff development, and all those present returned their completed questionnaire to the evaluator. Direct observation of the program was completed at eight schools between April 17 and April 24, 1980. An interview was conducted with the Community Involvement Specialist on May 20, 1980, and information was provided by the program's senior analyst throughout the school year.

Major Evaluation Questions and Results

1. Was the Bilingual Project implemented as designed?

   The program was not fully staffed. As of February, 9 of the 14 resource teachers were hired and 16 of the 23 teacher aides were hired. The fact that the number of personnel hired was less than the number approved resulted from the District's inability to locate and hire qualified bilingual teachers and aides.

   This project was designed to supplement existing DISD bilingual programs. Many of the schools did not have full bilingual programs and were only able to provide English-as-a-Second-Language instruction to students. These schools did not provide basic instruction in the student's dominant language because of the shortage of certified bilingual personnel.

2. Were the objectives of the program attained? Did 60% of the pupils in the Bilingual Program exhibit a 20% gain in general skill scores and the remaining students exhibit a 10% gain?

   This objective was not met. Of the 825 students who were given both the pretest and posttest, 261 (31.6%) had a posttest increase equal to or greater than 20% of the total pretest score. In addition, 227 (27.5%) of the students showed an increase equal to or greater than 10% but less than 20%. Table 1 shows the percent of increase in posttest scores by level of test administered. The objective was not met for any of the levels of the test. Table 1 also shows that 337 (40.8%) of the students exhibited an increase of less than 10% on the tests.

   Table 2 shows the percent of increase for Bilingual Program students in English and Spanish. The program objectives were not met in either of the languages, but the percent of increase in scores was larger for students whose dominant language was Spanish.

Table 1

Percent of Increase in General Ability Scores by Level of Test

| Increase | Level of Test | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Preschool | | One | | Two | | Three | | Total | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Less than 10% | 153 | 40.9 | 85 | 38.8 | 57 | 49.6 | 42 | 35.9 | 337 | 40.8 |
| 10 to 19.9% | 102 | 27.3 | 68 | 31.1 | 31 | 27.0 | 26 | 22.2 | 227 | 27.5 |
| 20% or Greater | 119 | 31.8 | 66 | 30.1 | 27 | 23.5 | 49 | 41.9 | 261 | 31.6 |
| Total | 374 | 100.0 | 219 | 100.0 | 115 | 100.0 | 117 | 100.0 | 825 | 100.0 |

Table 2

Increase in Percent of General Ability for English- and Spanish-Dominant Students

| Increase | English | | Spanish | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % |
| Less than 10% | 125 | 44.5 | 154 | 38.3 |
| 10 to 19.9% | 78 | 27.8 | 109 | 27.1 |
| 20% or greater | 78 | 27.8 | 139 | 34.6 |
| Total | 281 | 100.0 | 402 | 100.0 |

Table 3 shows the percent of increase by each of the schools in the project. The objective was not met in any of the schools.

Pretest scores were much higher than expected for some students. Because of the ceiling effect, it was not possible for those students to meet the stated objective. For example, if a student had a pretest score of 67 or higher on the preschool level of the test, the posttest objective of a 20% increase was impossible to attain because the highest possible score on that level of test was 80. The ceiling effect was most visible in the preschool level of the test. Because of this, the evaluation staff felt it appropriate to include further descriptive analysis which is included in Table 4. This table shows that although the objectives of the program were not met, there were increases in total scores on the posttest.

While the objectives of the program were not met, some gains in general ability scores were demonstrated. However, in the absence of a control group, the reason for these gains could be the program the students were involved in or a number of other plausible explanations such as history (change-producing events in addition to the program), maturation (biological or psychological processes which vary with the passage of time), or the effect of testing itself (the effect of the pretest, i.e., persons usually do better the second time they take a test).

3. Did 100% of the resource teachers provide the supplementary assistance specified in the activities section of the proposal?

Activities Questionnaires were returned to the evaluation staff by all nine of the resource teachers during staff development at the end of the school year. All nine of the resource teachers responded that they helped the instructional team in the identification of special needs of ESAA students, mostly by testing and observation. One teacher reported that the instructional team was an added burden and that many times their suggestions were not helpful. All except one of the resource teachers reported they helped the classroom teacher in the implementation of a prescriptive program for the students after their needs had been identified. Seven of the respondents reported they helped in the implementation of appropriate classroom management, and two responded they did not help in this area. All nine resource teachers helped in the evaluation of student progress, mostly by testing, with the classroom teacher. All nine of the resource teachers assisted

Table 3

Percent Increase from Pretest to Posttest by School

| School | Increase | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 10% | | 10 to 19.9% | | 20% or Greater | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Bonham | 18 | 30.0 | 23 | 38.3 | 19 | 31.7 |
| Bowie | 35 | 31.8 | 23 | 20.9 | 52 | 47.3 |
| Budd | 12 | 36.4 | 14 | 42.4 | 7 | 21.2 |
| Cowart | 10 | 41.7 | 9 | 37.5 | 5 | 20.8 |
| Donald | 5 | 25.0 | 8 | 40.0 | 7 | 35.0 |
| Hogg | 35 | 41.7 | 25 | 29.8 | 24 | 28.6 |
| Johnston | 9 | 50.0 | 3 | 16.7 | 6 | 33.3 |
| Juarez | 24 | 51.1 | 13 | 27.7 | 10 | 21.3 |
| Mt. Auburn | 40 | 38.8 | 21 | 20.4 | 42 | 40.8 |
| Peeler | 37 | 45.1 | 21 | 25.6 | 24 | 29.3 |
| Russell | 7 | 63.6 | 4 | 36.4 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Seguin | 9 | 50.0 | 5 | 27.8 | 4 | 22.2 |
| Travis | 32 | 47.8 | 18 | 26.9 | 17 | 25.4 |
| Winnetka | 6 | 100.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| St. Mary and Holy Trinity | 56 | 40.9 | 38 | 27.7 | 43 | 31.4 |

Table 4

Frequencies of Pretest and Posttest Scores by Level for DISD Schools

| Total Raw Score Range | Pretest N | Pretest % | Posttest N | Posttest % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Level Preschool (N=233)** | | | | |
| 0-39 | 7 | 3.0 | 2 | 0.9 |
| 40-49 | 29 | 12.4 | 5 | 2.1 |
| 50-59 | 63 | 26.6 | 21 | 9.0 |
| 60-69 | 85 | 36.5 | 73 | 31.3 |
| 70-80 | 50 | 21.5 | 132 | 56.6 |
| **Level One (N=219)** | | | | |
| 0-39 | 8 | 3.7 | 2 | 0.9 |
| 40-49 | 34 | 15.5 | 7 | 3.2 |
| 50-59 | 84 | 38.4 | 34 | 15.5 |
| 60-69 | 83 | 37.9 | 115 | 52.5 |
| 70-80 | 10 | 4.6 | 61 | 27.9 |
| **Level Two (N=115)** | | | | |
| 0-49 | 11 | 9.5 | 8 | 6.9 |
| 50-59 | 41 | 35.7 | 15 | 13.0 |
| 60-69 | 39 | 33.9 | 49 | 42.6 |
| 70-79 | 22 | 19.1 | 27 | 23.5 |
| 80-89 | 2 | 1.7 | 14 | 12.2 |
| 90-99 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 1.7 |
| **Level Three (N=116)** | | | | |
| 0-39 | 10 | 8.6 | 2 | 1.7 |
| 40-49 | 5 | 4.3 | 5 | 4.3 |
| 50-59 | 12 | 10.3 | 8 | 6.9 |
| 60-69 | 13 | 11.2 | 8 | 6.9 |
| 70-79 | 21 | 18.1 | 19 | 16.4 |
| 80-89 | 23 | 19.8 | 13 | 11.2 |
| 90-99 | 15 | 12.9 | 22 | 19.0 |
| 100-109 | 10 | 8.6 | 22 | 19.0 |
| 110-119 | 5 | 4.3 | 11 | 9.5 |
| 120-150 | 2 | 1.7 | 6 | 5.2 |

in the acquisition of materials on racial and ethnic heritage. Seven of the resource teachers helped in the development of instructional materials relevant to ESAA purposes while two reported they did not perform this activity. Two of the resource teachers reported spending the proposed four or more hours each month with parents to assist them in projects designed to help their children at home with school work; six of the resource teachers stated they did not spend that much time in this activity.

The objective of 100% of the resource teachers providing all the specified activities was not met. There were seven activities that the nine resource teachers were expected to perform. Three of the activities were performed by each of the resource teachers. Two additional activities were performed by seven of the resource teachers. Yet another activity was performed by eight resource teachers, and the seventh activity was performed by only three resource teachers. All nine of the resource teachers were performing three of the seven proposed activities, eight were performing one of the activities, seven were performing two of the activities, and the other activity was performed by three of the resource teachers.

4. Did 100% of the teacher aides provide the supplementary assistance specified in the proposal?

The questionnaire sent out to all 16 of the teacher aides was returned by only 9 of them to the Department of Research and Evaluation. Of the 9 respondents, all were providing small group instruction with the average size group of 4.8 students. Individual instruction was provided by 7 of the 9 according to their responses on the questionnaire. All the aides who responded were spending additional time with below-grade-level students. Eight of the 9 reported they supervised and encouraged cross-peer tutoring. In reference to helping the classroom teacher in making materials to help the child with specific problems, 7 stated they did, 1 stated she did not do this, and 1 left this question unanswered. Only 1 of the aides who returned the quesionnaire was a parent of an ESAA student.

Although the information does not include all the teacher aides, the information shows the objective was not met. Two of the five proposed activities were performed by all nine responding aides. A third activity was performed by eight of the nine aides. The last two activities were performed by seven of the aides. All 9 of the respondents were performing two of the five proposed activities, 8 were performing one of the activities, and 7 were performing two of the activities

that were asked on the questionnaire and were included in the proposal for all the teacher aides to perform.

5. Did 80% of the administrators, teachers, and teacher aides participate in the bilingual workshops and seminars?

   The Bilingual Multicultural Education Branch of DISD conducted the workshops and seminars for all the bilingual staff in the District. All resource teachers were required to attend 10 staff development days: 5 conducted the week before students reported for school (August 13 to August 17, 1979) and 5 conducted the week after school was dismissed for the summer (June 2 to June 6, 1980). In addition, there were eight other personnel development sessions offered, and four of the eight resource teachers attended two of these sessions as indicated by sign-in rosters provided by the project manager. The project manager, secretary, and community specialist also attended two of these sessions. From the activities questionnaire which was completed by nine of the teacher aides, all except two of them indicated they had been to the staff development sessions. Of these two, one stated she had not attended any due to special circumstances and the other one did not answer this question.

6. Did the parents of students in the ESAA Bilingual Education Program participate in the parent involvement activities outlined in the proposal?

   Throughout the school year, parent involvement activities were designed by the community specialist so that unfamiliarity with English was not a barrier. All the activities were in both English and Spanish, or, on occasion, only in Spanish. Also, a Vietnamese translator was available when needed. The parents were involved in the development of the 1980-81 application through parent advisory meetings, PTA meetings, and phone calls to those parents who had attended a workshop with the community specialist. Three newsletters were published by the ESAA Bilingual Project (one in November, March, and May). The newsletters included information to help build upon a family tradition that values education. Information that fosters intellectual, social, and emotional development along with current school and community news was also included in the newsletter which was produced in both English and Spanish and distributed through the schools in the project.

   A parent volunteer program in the classroom was implemented at each of the schools. The parents provided food, flowers, transportation, and some even helped make costumes for the Cinco de Mayo assemblies in the schools. Parents also read

and talked to the students while they were in the classroom. The parent volunteer program was flexible enough to allow all the parents to participate as much of the time as possible. Only three of the nine resource teachers stated they worked at least four hours per month with parents to assist them in projects designed to help their children at home, as indicated they would in the proposal.

Additional Information

Elliott, G. L. and Murray, W. R. Evaluation of the 1979-80 Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) Basic Project, Bilingual Component (EE80-319-31-09). Dallas, Texas: Dallas Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, September 1980.

## APPENDIX

The purpose of this Appendix is to describe the Tests of General Ability of the Inter-american Series so that the reader can have knowledge of the test's origin, what it measures, and some of the statistical data related to understanding the test scores reported in the Evaluation of the 1979-80 ESAA Bilingual Programs of the Dallas Independent School District.

### History

The Inter-American Series of parallel tests in English and Spanish grew out of a study of the teaching of English in Puerto Rico in the early 1940s. The native language of the Puerto Rican child was, and is, Spanish, but a determined effort had been made under varying programs to develop a mastery of English as well as Spanish. Although the study was directed primarily toward the teaching of English, an evaluation of the situation as a whole required attention to both languages. The Committee on Modern Languages of the American Council on Education assembled a staff of native Spanish-speaking and English-speaking persons and constructed tests having the same content, except for the language, in which verbal content was expressed - that is, of the same content as nearly as it could be made by the staff. The objective was to select test items of similar difficulty common to the two cultures. It should be noted that activities common to the two cultures might not be comparable and the tests could reveal cultural differences. The comparability of the English and Spanish editions is the unique contribution of the Inter-American Series of tests. Each child can be tested in his native language and the scores of the two languages can be compared. The statistical results of the comparison are included in the Manual of the Inter-American Series, and a conservative approach would be to treat results as approximately equal.

### Tests of General Ability

The Tests of General Ability of the Inter-American series are designed to provide an estimate of a student's general ability to do academic work in general. At the preschool and primary levels (K-2) oral vocabulary and simple numerical items yield a Verbal-Numerical subscore, and exercises requiring the recognition of relationships presented by drawings yield a Nonverbal subscore. All are combined in a Total score. At levels 3-5 the subtests consist of exercises in three general areas: Verbal, Nonverbal and Numerical. The Verbal materials test the understanding of written language and the ability to recognize relationships among concepts expressed by words. The Nonverbal materials also present problems of relationship among concepts, but in these exercises the problems are expressed by pictures or drawings with only initial verbal directions. In the Numerical materials, the ability to think quantitatively is tested by exercises in arithmetic computation and by exercises in arithmetic reasoning (i.e., to complete a series of numbers).

The tests provide an estimate of abilities which cut across different fields of study. Objective evidence of the relation of the abilities measured by the tests to educational achievement is provided by correlations of the test scores with teachers' marks. Persons who wish to review this evidence and various other statistical data relating to the tests may consult the Technical Report of the Inter-American Series. (This report does not include any norms, except for the few norms presented incidentally as in Tables 73 and 74.) The scores obtained from these tests can be no more than estimates of the abilities which they are designed to measure. In the first place, the items of the test are only a sample, often a relatively small sample, of the many which could be constructed to measure the same ability. Besides, tests do not measure ability directly. Ability is inferred from performance, and performance varies not only with sample of materials included in the test, but also with conditions under which the test is administered and the physical and mental state of the person who is tested.

## Different Forms of the Test

The pretest and the posttest forms of the test were constructed of materials similar in content and difficulty. The English and Spanish editions have approximately the same content and are presumably of similar difficulty; however, some differences in the difficulty of the two forms in the same language and of the same form in the two languages is to be expected. The claim of similar difficulty in the different languages must rest on the method and materials used in the construction of the tests since no group of persons of known equal ability in English and Spanish can be found for a comparison of the difficulties of the test.

## General Ability or Intelligence Tests?

The user should not read into the title more than the contents of the test justify. The materials are too limited in breadth to include the many abilities which should be summarized to provide an adequate measure of general intelligence - that is, in a great variety of situations. But a person does not do equally well with problems in different fields. A test of intellectual ability can sample only some of the many areas in which ability operates. No test samples adequately all areas of mental activity.

Whether indicated by the term intelligence, general ability, or other, the ability to do mental work must grow. It is not fully developed at birth, ready to operate at a fixed level regardless of the conditions under which the child lives. A child's curve of mental development rises more rapidly with superior cultural opportunities and much slower with inferior cultural opportunities. The test measures only what exists in one child at a certain time, not something which might have been.